

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS

SUBJECT: IMPACT OF NEW SECURITY LEGISLATION ON MILGRPS

REF: STATE 97277

1. AS DEPT MAY KNOW, GEN MCAULIFFE'S CONCEPT (AND RECOMMENDATION TO DOD) WAS TO MOVE LA MILGRPS DOWN TO A "CORE MANNING" OF ABOUT 6-8 BY FY 80 OR 81, AND TO CHANGE TO CONCEPT OF THESE GROUPS FROM TRADITIONAL ASSISTANCE/ADVISORY ROLES TO CONSULTANT/LIAISON.

2. OBVIOUSLY TERMS OF PROBABLE LEGISLATION WOULD NOT PERMIT SUCH SLOW-PACED CHANGE. I BELIEVE THAT USCINCSO'S END CONCEPT OF LIAISON STAFF OFFICERS IS A SOUND ONE, SUITABLE TO CURRENT REALITIES, AND COULD BE IMPLEMENTED JRJ AT ONCE RATHER THAN IN STAGES. WHAT IS CENTRAL HERE IS THE CHANGE IN BASIC CONCEPT OF THE MILITARY PRESENCE AND NOT THE NUMBERS GAME. INDEED, TO ACHIEVE ANY SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION IN NUMBERS THE CONCEPT MUST BE CHANGED. SIMPLY REDUCING PERSONNEL IS SUBJECT TO MUSUNDERSTANDING BY HOST COUNTRIES. THE CAUSAL SEQUENCE WE SHOULD PROJECT TO HOST COUNTRIES IS CHANGE IN CONCEPT TO SHARPLY REDUCED MANNING AND NOT THE REVERSE.

3. MAINTENANCE OF A MILITARY PRESENCE TO COOPERATE WITH THE COLOMBIAN MILITARY IN ITS MODERNIZATION PRO-

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GRAM, AND GENERALLY TO MAINTAIN LIAISON, IS IMPORTANT

TO US-COLOMBIAN RELATIONS (SEE CASP); WE BELIEVE THAT SUCH A PRESENCE CAN BE JUSTIFIED BEYOND FY 77. WHAT I WOULD PROPOSE (AND HAVE RECOMMENDED TO USCINCSO) IS THE FOLLOWING:

A) THE CONVERSION OF MILGRP INTO A STAFF OF 3-6 OFFICERS FOR LIAISON WITH MOD AND GENERAL STAFF. THREE OFFICERS WOULD MEAN ONE FROM EACH SERVICE; MAXIMUM MIGHT BE TWO OR TOTAL OF SIX: A NAVAL STAFF LIAISON MIGHT USEFULLY BE ASSIGNED TO THE COMMANDER OF THE COLOMBIAN FLEET IN CARTAGENA.

B) THESE OFFICERS WOULD BASICALLY BE CONSULTANTS AND "GENERALIST" ADVISORS AT THE GENERAL STAFF LEVEL, ABLE TO WORK WITH THE MOD AND THE COMMANDER OF THE ARMED FORCES ON PROBLEMS AND SITUATIONS THE LATTER WISH TO WORK OUT WITH US. AS SUCH THEY WOULD BE EXPEDITERS, COUNSELORS, LINKS TO THE US MILITARY; THEY WOULD FACILITATE AND MONITOR FMS SALES AND CREDIT, HELP PLAN AND IMPLEMENT TRAINING PROGRAMS: THEY WOULD BE OMBUDSMEN DRAWING ON DOD BACKSTOPPING AND HELP AS NEEDED, E.G. SETTING UP MTT'S OR PUTTING TOGETHER OTHER KINDS OF PACKAGES OF HELP AS MAY BE NEEDED. THE TECHNICAL CAPACITY TO HELP WOULD REMAIN IN CONUS (OR CZ), NOT IN LARGE RESIDENT STAFFS. THESE OFFICERS WOULD BE QUARTERED WITH THE MOD OR GENERAL STAFF AND IN EFFECT FORM PART OF THEIR PERSONAL STAFFS AS LIAISON AND "GENERALIST" ADVISORS. RESIDENT SPECIALIST ADVISORS AND UNIT ADVISORS WOULD BE ELIMINATED.

C) THE MILGRP AS A SEPARATE MILITARY ORGANIZATION OR ADMINISTRATIVE ENTITY WOULD DISAPPEAR. THE LIAISON ADVISORS WOULD HAVE NO ATTRIBUTES AS A SEPARATE MILITARY ORGANIZATION WITH ATTENDANT ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES. DAO WOULD PROVIDE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT, E.G. CLASSIFIED TYPING, FILES, COMMUNICATIONS. (NOTE THAT NO EXPANSION OF THE DAO'S FUNCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES WOULD BE INVOLVED, SIMPLY IN HOUSE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT). ELIMINATION A SEPARATE MILGRP ORGANIZATION MIGHT HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OF CONFIDENTIAL

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REDUCING POTENTIAL IRRITATION AND "DEPENDENCY" RE- SENTMENTS BY REMOVING THE IMAGE OF A FOREIGN MILITARY ORGANIZATION IN THEIR MIDSTS.

D) FROM OUR MILITARY CHAIN OF COMMAND POINT OF VIEW, THE CONCEPT MIGHT BE SOMETHING AS FOLLOWS. THE LIAISON OFFICERS FROM EACH SERVICE WOULD BE OFFICIALLY ASSIGNED TO THE RESPECTIVE US

SERVICE MATERIAL COMMAND HEADQUARTERS IN CONUS, BUT WITH DUTY STATION IN COLOMBIA. THEY WOULD HAVE A DUAL RESPONSIBILITY TO DSAA FOR TRAINING MATTERS. EITHER THE SENIOR LIAISON OFFICER OR A SEPARATE O-6 LIAISON OFFICER, PERHAPS FROM DSAA, COULD ACT AS OVERALL COORDINATOR AND SUPERVISOR OF THE SMALL LIAISON STAFF. THUS WITH A MANNING OF A MINIMUM OF THREE OR A MAXIMUM OF 6, AN EXPEDITING STAFF OF GENERALISTS WOULD WORK DIRECTLY WITH THE MOD AND GENERAL STAFF, ADVISE THE AMBASSADOR ON MILITARY MATTERS AND RETAIN MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY.

4. THE SUCCESS OF SUCH A PATTERN WOULD DEPEND UPON:

A) FAST EFFECTIVE DOD BACKSTOPPING, I.E. HOW QUICKLY AND WELL WE CAN RESPOND TO HOST COUNTRY MILITARY NEEDS, E.G. TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT REQUESTS, CALL UP OF MTT'S ETC. MERELY EXPLAINING OUR BUREAU-CRATIC PROBLEMS AND WHY WE CANNOT DO SOMETHING WILL NOT DO.

B) VERY CAREFUL SELECTION OF TOP QUALITY, INTELLIGENT, SENSITIVE PERSONNEL. ESSENTIALLY THE LIAISON/CONSULTANTS WOULD BE "DIPLOMATS", AND THEIR EFFECTIVENESS AND INFLUENCE WILL DEPEND UPON HOW WELL THEY CAN MAINTAIN HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS. WHAT WILL BE NEEDED WILL BE MORE THAN TECHNICAL COMPETENCE; THEY MUST ALSO BE SENSITIVE TO PERSONAL AND CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES AND ABOVE ALL BE ABLE TO SPEAK THE LANGUAGE. FRANKLY SELECTION WILL HAVE TO BE BETTER THAN IT HAS BEEN.

C) THE UNIFORMITY WITH WHICH THE CONCEPT IS IMPLEMENTED AND EXPLAINED IN THE HEMISPHERE. THIS SHOULD BE A HEMISPHERE WIDE CONCEPT, RATHER THAN AN EXCEPTION.

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CAREFUL PRESENTATION AND EXPLANATION TO HOST MOD'S WOULD BE NEEDED. IF A TRADITIONAL MILITARY GROUP IS NEEDED ANYWHERE THAT SHOULD BE THE EXCEPTION. FOR COLOMBIA AND VENEZUELA PARTICULARLY THE PATTERN SHOULD BE UNIFORM. "EVENHANDEDNESS" IN THIS WILL BE ESSENTIAL, IF MISUNDERSTANDINGS ARE TO BE AVOIDED.

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